



VHA DIFFUSION OF EXCELLENCE

Shark Tank



2023 Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Shark Tank Competition

Applicant Frequently Asked Questions

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Table of Contents

VHA Shark Tank Competition Overview	3
What is the VHA Shark Tank Competition?	3
Who can apply to the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition?	4
Is supervisor approval required to apply to 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition?	4
Why is supervisor approval not required?.....	4
What are important dates during the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition?	4
2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition Application Process	5
How can I apply to the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition?	5
What if I miss the submission deadline?	5
What are some tips to consider when completing a VHA Shark Tank application?	5
My practice crosses several of the key VHA Shark Tank Priorities. Which should I select as the practice's primary Priority?	6
What happens after I submit an application?	6
Who do I contact if I have additional questions?	6
2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition Application Evaluation Process	6
Who will evaluate the submitted practices?	6
What are the application evaluation criteria?	6
Are most of the selected practices low cost to implement?	6
What is expected of an applicant whose practice is selected as a semifinalist, finalist, or Promising Practice?.....	7
2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition Bidding Process and Event	7
Who are Sharks? Can I serve as a Shark?.....	7
How does the bidding process work?	8
What happens on the day of the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition?.....	8
Promising Practice Designation and Implementation	8
What happens after the VHA Shark Tank Competition?	8
What is a Promising Practice?.....	8
What are the benefits of being selected as a Promising Practice of the VHA Shark Tank Competition?	9
Veterans Health Administration Innovation Ecosystem (VHA IE), Diffusion of Excellence, and VHA Diffusion Marketplace Overview	9
What is the VHA Innovation Ecosystem (VHA IE)?	9
What is the Diffusion of Excellence?.....	9
How does Diffusion of Excellence work?	10
Why should I join the Diffusion of Excellence community?	10

What is the VHA Diffusion Marketplace?	11
Appendix	12
2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition Application	12
2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition Evaluation Tool	24
Evaluator Instructions	24
Evaluation Questions	25

VHA Shark Tank Competition Overview

What is the VHA Shark Tank Competition?

The VHA Shark Tank Competition shines a spotlight on employees passionate about solving some of the toughest challenges across VHA and provides them with a platform to expose their practices to all levels of leadership and contribute to elevating the standard of care for Veterans. Practices must address one of the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Priorities. This year's priorities align with the [VA Under Secretary for Health's VHA priorities](#).

2023 VHA Shark Tank Priorities

- Hire faster and more competitively
- Connect Veterans to the soonest and best care
- Serve Veterans with military and environmental exposures
- Accelerate VA's journey to a High Reliability Organization
- Support Veterans' whole health, their caregivers, and survivors
- Prevent Veteran Suicide

Additionally, the Competition seeks practices that improve outcomes for the following populations:

- All Veterans
- LGBTQ Veterans
- Older American Veterans
- Post-9/11 Veterans
- Pre-9/11 Veterans
- Rural Veterans
- Women Veterans
- VA Employees
- Veteran Caregivers

Who can apply to the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

Any current VHA employee who has **successfully implemented** a practice in at least one VHA facility can apply to the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition. If the employee has implemented the practice successfully at their pilot site, this implementation satisfies the minimum one facility requirement. Additionally, all applicants must have **at least three months** of field-tested data that support the practice's viability and effectiveness.

An employee can apply as an individual contributor or on behalf of a team, service line, or medical center. If submitting a group effort, **one individual** must serve as the point of contact during the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition application process.

Is supervisor approval required to apply to 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

Supervisor approval is not required; however, we recommend you make your supervisor aware of your submission.

Why is supervisor approval not required?

Our goal is to foster and create an open culture of innovation that enables all VA employees an opportunity to share their innovative practice. Diffusion of Excellence would like the opportunity to review innovative practices even though a supervisor or facility may feel it is not innovative enough or not robust enough for a VHA Shark Tank submission. We consider many factors in our evaluation and there is always a chance for any practice to garner attention or be identified as a need within the VA.

What are important dates during the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

Figure 1 depicts key milestones for the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition.

Figure 1. 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition Timeline



2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition Application Process

How can I apply to the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

To apply, please click the “Apply now” link at [VHA Shark Tank](#) on the Diffusion Marketplace. Applications open on **April 3, 2023, and close April 28, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. ET**. Late applications will **NOT** be accepted..

What if I miss the submission deadline?

If you miss the submission deadline, you can submit your promising practice in the next VHA Shark Tank Competition, tentatively scheduled for the Spring of 2024. Late applications will **NOT** be accepted.

Please monitor the [VHA Shark Tank Competition](#) page on the VHA Diffusion Marketplace for more information on the 2024 application process.

What are some tips to consider when completing a VHA Shark Tank application?

When completing your application, please consider the following:

- Your application will be evaluated on its feasibility, meaningfulness, and strategic value to VHA. The evaluation rubric is available in the [Appendix](#) of this document.
- You will not be able to save your progress in the application and return to it. You can find the application to review the questions, share with your team, and answer questions before applying, in the [Appendix](#) of this document.
- To assess the great innovation practices within VHA, the VHA Shark Tank Competition asks for in-depth information in your application. Be prepared to spend at least 45 minutes in one sitting completing this application.
- **To protect the privacy of VHA patients and those who care for them, do not include any Protected Health Information (PHI).** To learn more about PHI and the importance of protecting, visit [this link](#).
- Due to formatting restraints, you will not be able to paste tables into the application, but you can use bulleted lists
- Determine whether your practice can be replicated in another VHA facility in approximately 6-12 months
- Use measurable data in your application when describing your practice’s impact, user experience, and financial value
- Provide details on the user experience for your target population (e.g., Veterans, employees, caregivers)
- List all resource requirements (e.g., employees, equipment) necessary to implement your practice at a new facility
- Describe the specific steps to implement your practice, including timeframes
- Avoid acronyms and jargon

My practice crosses several of the key VHA Shark Tank Priorities. Which should I select as the practice's primary Priority?

In general, select the VHA Shark Tank Priority that most closely aligns with your practice. Evaluators will review submissions based on the Priority, so select the one you think will have the most appropriate evaluator for your submission. For more information on the priorities and their subcategories, please visit [VA Under Secretary for Health's VHA priorities](#).

What happens after I submit an application?

After you submit a completed application, Diffusion Support will e-mail you a copy of your application within one week.

After the application period closes on April 28, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. ET, evaluators will review and score applications. Diffusion will announce semifinalists the week of June 12, 2023. Semifinalist applications will go through a second round of evaluation and Diffusion will announce finalists August 15, 2023.

Who do I contact if I have additional questions?

For questions related to the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition, please email [VA Diffusion Support](#).

2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition Application Evaluation Process

Who will evaluate the submitted practices?

Medical Center and Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Directors, Innovation Specialists, Systems Redesign Coordinators, and other recommended evaluators will review the applications.

During the second round of evaluation, Program Office leaders and members of the Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI) team will review and score semifinalist applications. Evaluators will have approximately three weeks to review applications during each round of evaluation.

What are the application evaluation criteria?

Please find evaluation criteria in the [Appendix](#) of this document.

Are most of the selected practices low cost to implement?

The cost levels of the submitted practices vary. In previous VHA Shark Tank Competitions, selected practices had both low and high implementation costs. We recognize that low-cost

practices may spread more easily to other facilities; however, low cost is not required for selection.

What is expected of an applicant whose practice is selected as a semifinalist, finalist, or Promising Practice?

If selected as a **semifinalist**:

- Your application will continue to the second round of evaluation
- You will not need to take any additional action if selected as a semifinalist

If selected as a **finalist**, you will:

- Attend three information sessions leading up to the October 2023 live VHA Shark Tank Competition
- Create a page on [Diffusion Marketplace](#) to showcase your practice
- Create a wish list of resources to help guide bidding Sharks interested in your practice
- Prepare and deliver a virtual teaser pitch to help guide bidding Sharks interested in your practice
- Give a three-minute live pitch presentation at the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition in October, 2023 in Washington, DC

If you are a **Promising Practice**, or winner, of the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition, you will:

- Attend a post-competition information session
- Participate in Diffusion's three-day, in-person Base Camp in early 2024 to collaborate with your implementation team and create an implementation plan for Facilitated Replication.
 - Implementation teams consist of:
 - **Diffusion Fellow (DF)**– Promising Practice team member(s) (That's you!)
 - **Implementing Facility Fellow (IFF)** - Representative from the winning Shark bid facility or VISN
 - An **Implementation Lead** from Diffusion Support
 - Any other individuals supporting Promising Practice implementation
- Participate in Facilitated Replication by collaborating with your implementation team for six to eight months to replicate your practice in the winning Shark bid facility or VISN
- Participate in weekly calls to collaborate with and advise the implementation team
- Support the potential national rollout and implementation of your Promising Practice

2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition Bidding Process and Event

Who are Sharks? Can I serve as a Shark?

Only Medical Center and VISN Directors will serve as Sharks and bid resources to implement finalist practice(s). If you are a Medical Center or VISN Director and are interested in serving as a Shark, please contact the [VA Diffusion Support Team](#).

How does the bidding process work?

Medical Center and VISN Director Sharks review finalist practice materials to help them craft and submit bids of resources to support practices they are interested in implementing at their location. Finalist practice materials include the finalist's Marketplace page, bid wish list, and a virtual pitch. Diffusion will present bids to finalists who receive them live at the competition for review and selection. There is no minimum or maximum number of practices that Sharks can bid on. Examples of resources that Sharks may bid include:

- One or more part-time or full-time equivalents (FTEs) to focus on implementation of the practice at their site
- Travel funds
- Designated space in their facility
- Time and/or other resources to help support implementation of the practice

What happens on the day of the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition?

The Diffusion of Excellence leadership team will host the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition in October 2023 at the VHA Innovation Experience (iEX) and live stream the event to facilities across the country. Finalists will attend and give a live three-minute pitch presentation on their practice during the competition. Following the presentation, a small panel of Sharks will facilitate a two-minute question and answer (Q&A) session with the Finalists regarding their practices.

Promising Practice Designation and Implementation

What happens after the VHA Shark Tank Competition?

Finalist practices who receive a Promising Practice designation at the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition will select a winning bid and proceed with six to eight months of Facilitated Replication in the winning bid Shark's facility or VISN. Facilitated replication kicks off with Diffusion's Base Camp in early 2024.

Finalist practices that are not designated as Promising Practices will not continue with Diffusion's Facilitated Replication and implementation process. There are still many benefits to participating in the VHA Shark Tank Competition such as exposure to a wide VHA audience, including leadership. Many participants who are not designated Promising Practices enjoy success from attention and inquiries outside of Diffusion's standard implementation pathway due to their participation in VHA Shark Tank.

What is a Promising Practice?

Diffusion works with guidance from evaluators and leadership to select around 10 Promising Practices from the pool of finalists identified in the second round of application evaluation. Diffusion identifies Promising Practices based on the potential viability and replicability of a practice, the number of bids received, and application evaluation data. Promising Practices continue to work with Diffusion to implement and replicate their practice throughout VHA through Facilitated Replication and Diffusion's implementation process.

What are the benefits of being selected as a Promising Practice of the VHA Shark Tank Competition?

If a finalist's practice becomes a Promising Practice, the finalist and anyone on their practice team are known as Diffusion of Excellence Fellows (DF). The benefits include:

- Recognition from VA and VHA senior leaders
- Invitation to attend Diffusion of Excellence Base Camp in early 2024
- Access to communication (e.g., graphics, toolkits) and technical (e.g., data analysis) support
- Support for conference submission development
- Access to project management and practice diffusion training
- Possible national rollout of the practice

Veterans Health Administration Innovation Ecosystem (VHA IE), Diffusion of Excellence, and VHA Diffusion Marketplace Overview

What is the VHA Innovation Ecosystem (VHA IE)?

VHA IE is the catalyst for enabling the discovery and spread of mission-driven health care innovation to advance care delivery and service that exceeds expectations, restores hope, and builds trust within the Veteran community. As part of the VHA Office of Discovery, Education and Affiliate Networks (DEAN), VHA IE leverages the collective power of innovation champions from across VHA to drive improvement and foster a culture of innovation and continuous learning.

For more information, please visit the [VHA IE](#) website.

What is the Diffusion of Excellence?

VHA Diffusion of Excellence specializes in scaling emergent, high-impact health care practices across the nation's largest integrated health care system consisting of more than 300,000 employees serving over nine million Veterans. The 2015 Veterans Choice Act studies uncovered that on average VHA outperformed the private sector on many measures, but variation between facilities resulted in poor outcomes for some Veterans. VHA took a unique approach to solving

this issue by designing and deploying a model to identify, test, and diffuse evidence-based practices across VHA, naming it Diffusion of Excellence.

VHA Diffusion of Excellence puts VA's talented clinical and administrative workforce at the helm of enterprise-wide health care improvement initiatives. Since 2015, VHA has held eight Shark Tank-style competitions, each followed by the Diffusion of Excellence Base Camp (Base Camp). During Base Camp, the winners, known as Diffusion Fellows, build implementation plans for practice replication. VHA consults the Diffusion of Excellence Fellows on adapting the practices to meet the unique needs of local Veteran populations and employees. Once the practices prove to be replicable and deliver consistent impact, Diffusion of Excellence pairs with national stakeholders to collaboratively develop strategies for national diffusion throughout the VHA health care system.

For more information on Diffusion of Excellence, please visit the [Diffusion of Excellence](#) website.

How does Diffusion of Excellence work?

Diffusion of Excellence uses the operational model depicted in **Figure 2** to discover, test, replicate, and scale Promising Practices across VHA.

Figure 2. Diffusion of Excellence Model



Why should I join the Diffusion of Excellence community?

Diffusion of Excellence brings together a diverse national network of fellow innovators working to hone and standardize their Promising Practices. By participating in Diffusion of Excellence, you will

- Accelerate the scaling of your practice with the support of the Diffusion of Excellence community
- Improve and expand the impact of your practice on the Veteran community
- Receive recognition from national leadership for you, your team, and your facility
- Gain leadership support for further adoption of your practice

What is the VHA Diffusion Marketplace?

The [VHA Diffusion Marketplace \(Marketplace\)](#) is a web-based platform that enables VHA employees to share, discover, and implement innovations across the health care system. The Marketplace helps frontline VHA employees access and spread innovative health care ideas and solutions that positively impact Veterans lives. The Marketplace offers easy access to a range of innovations, tutorials, marketing materials, and contact information for the innovators. Employees can collaborate with innovation creators and their local teams to identify and adapt new innovations to fit their facility's specific needs. The Marketplace strengthens VHA in becoming a learning health care system, fostering a culture of continuous improvement in Veteran health care.

Appendix

2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition Application

This is a copy of the questions and various prompts an applicant will encounter when completing the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition application. This copy is intended for reference only and the live application may have slight variation.

For a fillable practice .pdf of application questions to use when preparing your answers in advance of completing the live application online, please visit [VHA Shark Tank](#) on Diffusion Marketplace and click the "Apply Now" button. You will find a link to download the fillable practice application .pdf on the application landing page.

Page / Q. #	Survey Text	Answer Choices	Character Count
	• Your application will be evaluated on its feasibility, meaningfulness, and strategic value to VHA. The evaluation rubric is available as a PDF for you to view before completing your application.		
	• You will not be able to save your progress in the application and return to it. You may download a fillable PDF of the application to review questions, share them with your team, and collect answers before accessing and filling out the live application.		
	• VHA Shark Tank Competition requests detailed and complete applications to enable quality assessments of innovation practice submissions. Be prepared to spend at least 45 minutes in one sitting completing this application.		
	• To protect the privacy of VHA's patients and those who care for them, do not include any Protected Health Information (PHI).		
	If you have any questions, please email the Diffusion Support Team at VADiffusionSupport@VA.gov .		
Page 2: VHA Shark Tank Competition Eligibility			
	Before proceeding to the rest of the application, answer the questions below to ensure you're eligible for the VHA Shark Tank Competition.		
	To be eligible to apply, you must currently be an active VA employee. Are you currently an active VA employee?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No	
	You have indicated that you are not currently an active VA employee, so you are ineligible to apply for VHA Shark Tank at this time. To learn about other ways to get involved in innovation with VA, check out Pathfinder.VA.gov . If you have any questions, reach out to the Diffusion Support Team .		

	To be eligible, your practice must be successfully implemented in at least one VHA facility. This could be any VHA facility, including your parent facility. Has your practice been successfully implemented in at least one VHA facility?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No	
	You have indicated that your practice is not currently implemented in at least one VHA facility, so your practice is not eligible at this time. To learn about other ways to get involved in innovation with VA, check out Pathfinder.VA.gov . If you have any questions, please reach out to the Diffusion Support Team .		
	To be eligible, your practice must have collected at least three months of data from field tests supporting your practice's viability and effectiveness. Has your practice collected three months of data from field tests?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No	
	You have indicated that your practice does not currently have three months of data from field tests supporting practice viability and effectiveness, so it is not eligible at this time. To learn about other ways to get involved in innovation with VA, check out Pathfinder.VA.gov . If you have any questions, please reach out to the Diffusion Support Team .		
	To continue with your application, click "Let's Go" to proceed to the next page.		
Page 3: Team Member Information			
1	First Name:		50 characters
2	Last Name:		50 characters
3	Please enter your VA Email Address:		50 characters
4	VA Position Title:		100 characters
5	Role in your team:	1. Team Leader 2. Innovation Specialist 3. Data Support 4. Leadership Liaison 5. Technical Implementation 6. Systems Redesign Support 7. Public affairs 8. Fiscal planning 9. Other	
5.1	If Other, what is your role?		100 characters

6	Which VISN are you apart of?	1. VISN 1 2. VISN 2 3. VISN 4 4. VISN 5 5. VISN 6 6. VISN 7 7. VISN 8 8. VISN 9 9. VISN 10 10. VISN 12 11. VISN 15 12. VISN 16 13. VISN 17 14. VISN 19 15. VISN 20 16. VISN 21 17. VISN 22 18. VISN 23 19. Not associated with a VISN	
6.1	If applicable, which VISN 1 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital 2. Manchester VA Medical Center 3. Providence VA Medical Center 4. VA Boston Healthcare System 5. VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System 6. VA Connecticut Healthcare System 7. VA Maine Healthcare System 8. White River Junction VA Medical Center 9. VISN Office	
6.2	If applicable, which VISN 2 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. Albany Stratton VA Medical Center 2. Bronx VA Medical Center 3. Northport VA Medical Center 4. Syracuse VA Medical Center 5. VA Finger Lakes Healthcare System 6. VA Hudson Valley Health Care System 7. VA New Jersey Health Care System 8. VA New York Harbor Healthcare System 9. VA Western NY Healthcare System 10. VISN Office	

6.3	If applicable, which VISN 4 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. Altoona, PA 2. Butler, PA 3. Coatesville, PA 4. Erie, PA 5. Lebanon, PA 6. Pittsburgh, PA 7. Philadelphia, PA 8. Wilkes-Barre, PA 9. Wilmington, DE 10. VISN Office	
6.4	If applicable, which VISN 5 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. Baltimore VA Medical Center 2. Beckley VA Medical Center 3. Huntington VA Medical Center 4. Loch Raven VA Community Living and 5. Rehabilitation Center 6. Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center 7. Martinsburg VA Medical Center 8. Perry Point VA Medical Center 9. Washington DC VA Medical Center 10. VISN Office	
6.5	If applicable, which VISN 6 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. Asheville VA Medical Center 2. Durham VA Medical Center 3. Fayetteville VA Medical Center 4. Hampton VA Medical Center 5. Richmond VA Medical Center 6. Salem VA Medical Center 7. Salisbury VA Medical Center 8. VISN Office	
6.6	If applicable, which VISN 7 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. Atlanta VAMC 2. Birmingham VAMC 3. Central Alabama Health Care System - East 4. Central Alabama Health Care System - West 5. Charlie Norwood VAMC 6. Carl Vinson VAMC 7. Tuscaloosa VAMC 8. Ralph H. Johnson VAMC 9. Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VAMC 10. VISN Office	

6.7	If applicable, which VISN 8 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. Bay Pines VA Healthcare System 2. James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital 3. Miami VA Healthcare System 4. North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System 5. Orlando VA Medical Center - Lake Nona 6. VA Caribbean Healthcare System 7. West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System 8. VISN Office	
6.8	If applicable, which VISN 9 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. Lexington VA Medical Center 2. Memphis VA Medical Center 3. Mountain Home VA Medical Center 4. Louisville VA Medical Center 5. Tennessee Valley Healthcare System 6. VISN Office	
6.9	If applicable, which VISN 10 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center 2. Battle Creek VA Medical Center 3. Chalmers P. Wylie VA Ambulatory Care Center 4. Chillicothe VA Medical Center 5. Cincinnati VA Medical Center 6. Dayton VA Medical Center 7. John D. Dingell VA Medical Center 8. Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center 9. Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center 10. VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System 11. VA Northern Indiana Health Care System - Marion Campus 12. VA Northern Indiana Health Care System-Fort Wayne Campus 13. VISN Office	

6.10	If applicable, which VISN 11 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jesse Brown VA Medical Center 2. Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital 3. Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center 4. Capt. James A. Lovell FHCC 5. William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital 6. Tomah VA Medical Center 7. Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center 8. VA Illiana Health Care System 9. VISN Office 	
6.11	If applicable, which VISN 15 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. St. Louis VA Health Care System 2. Kansas City VA Medical Center 3. Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans' Hospital 4. Eastern Kansas Health Care System 5. Robert J. Dole VA Medical Center 6. Marion VA Medical Center 7. John J. Pershing VA Medical Center 8. VISN Office 	
6.12	If applicable, which VISN 16 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alexandria VA Health Care System 2. Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System 3. G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VA Medical Center 4. Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System 5. Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center 6. Overton Brooks VA Medical Center 7. Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System 8. Veterans Health Care System of the Ozarks 9. VISN Office 	
6.13	If applicable, which VISN 17 Medical Center are you associated with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amarillo VA Health Care System 2. Central Texas Veteran Health Care System 3. El Paso VA Health Care System 4. South Texas Veterans Health Care System 5. VA North Texas Health Care System 6. VA Texas Valley Coastal Bend Health Care System 7. West Texas VA Health Care 	

		System 8. VISN Office	
6.14	If applicable, which VISN 19 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. Eastern Oklahoma VA Health Care System 2. Fort Harrison VA Medical Center 3. Oklahoma City VA Health Care System 4. VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System 5. VA Salt Lake City Health Care System 6. Cheyenne VA Medical 7. Sheridan VA Medical Center 8. VA Western Colorado Health Care System 9. VISN Office	
6.15	If applicable, which VISN 20 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. Anchorage VA Medical Center 2. Boise VA Medical Center 3. Portland VA Medical Center 4. Portland VA Medical Center - Vancouver 5. Seattle VA Medical Center 6. American Lake VA Medical Center 7. Roseburg VA Medical Center 8. White City VA Medical Center 9. Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center 10. Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center 11. VISN Office	
6.16	If applicable, which VISN 21 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. Central California Health Care System 2. Manila Outpatient Clinic 3. Northern California Health Care System 4. Pacific Islands Health Care System 5. Palo Alto Health Care System 6. San Francisco VA Health Care System 7. Sierra Nevada Health Care System 8. VA Southern Nevada	

		Healthcare System 9. VISN Office	
6.17	If applicable, which VISN 22 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System 2. VA Loma Linda Healthcare System 3. VA Long Beach Healthcare System 4. New Mexico VA Health Care System 5. Northern Arizona VA Health Care System 6. Phoenix VA Health Care System 7. VA San Diego Healthcare System 8. Southern Arizona VA Health Care System 9. VISN Office	
6.18	If applicable, which VISN 23 Medical Center are you associated with?	1. Fargo VA Health Care System 2. Iowa City VA Health Care System 3. Minneapolis VA Health Care System 4. Omaha VA Medical Center--VA Nebraska-Western Iowa HCS 5. Sioux Falls VA Health Care System 6. St. Cloud VA Health Care System 7. VA Black Hills Health Care System - Hot Springs Campus 8. VA Black Hills Health Care System - Fort Meade Campus 9. VA Central Iowa Health Care System 10. VISN Office	
7	Do you work in a National Program Office?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No	

8	Do you have leadership buy-in or support at your facility?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No	
Page 4: Team Member Information			
9	Please provide names, titles, and VA email addresses of any key members involved in this effort. Please enter this information as such: First Name, Last Name, Title (VA Email Address);		1300 characters
10	Who is your practice's team leader?		50 characters
11	Who is your practice's main Point of Contact?		50 characters
Page 5: Practice Information and Metrics			
12	Practice Title:		200 Characters
	<p>The 2023 VHA Shark Tank Priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire faster and more competitively • Connect Veterans to the soonest and best care • Serve Veterans with toxic exposures • Accelerate our journey to High Reliability • Support Veterans' whole health, their caregivers, and survivors • Prevent Veteran suicide <p>For a full description of the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Priorities, please refer to our website.</p>		
13	Select the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Priority most relevant to your practice.	Option 1: Hire faster and more competitively Option 2: Connect Veterans to the soonest and best care Option 3: Serve Veterans with toxic exposures Option 4: Accelerate our journey to High Reliability Option 5: Support Veterans' whole health, caregivers, and survivors Option 6: Prevent Veteran suicide	

14	Please select the target population your practice benefits.	Option 1: All Veterans Option 2: LGBTQ+ Veterans Option 3: Veterans aged 65+ Option 4: Post-9/11 Veterans Option 5: Pre-9/11 Veterans Option 6: Rural Veterans Option 7: Women Veterans Option 8: Veterans struggling with mental health of PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) Option 9: Veterans at risk of suicide Option 10: Veterans with chronic or complex illnesses Option 11: Minority Veterans Option 12: VA Employees Option 13: Caregivers, Families, and Survivors Option 14: Other (please specify)	
14.1	If Other, please specify your target population:		100 characters
15	What is your practice's problem statement?		1000 characters
16	What led to the identification of the problem your practice addresses (research, patient feedback, issue, etc.)? Please explain in 2-3 sentences.		1000 characters
17	How does your practice address the problem identified in your problem statement? Please summarize in 2-3 sentences.		1000 characters
18	How long has your practice been implemented in your current facility?	1. 3 to 6 months 2. 6 months to 1 year 3. 1 to 2 years 4. Longer than 2 years	
19	How many sites is your practice currently implemented in?	1. 1 site 2. 2-4 sites 3. 5-9 sites 4. 10+ sites	
20	Why should VHA devote resources toward solving this problem across facilities? Please summarize in 1-2 sentences.		1000 characters

21	What critical metrics does your practice use to measure its impact in addressing your problem statement (e.g., reduced infection rates, improved patient/employee satisfaction, demonstrated cost savings or avoidance)?		1000 characters
22	Please describe how your practice tracks and collects metric data to determine your practice's success and 2-3 sentences summarizing the quantifiable impact your practice has had on your target population.		1300 characters
23	In 2-3 sentences, tell us a story about a time your solution worked (e.g., a time when your solution changed a Veteran's life, a time when it improved how VA employees do their work and deliver care). Please provide a quote from this experience if possible.		1000 characters
24	Has your practice published any studies or been featured in any articles?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No	
24.1	Please provide a summary of your study and provide links to the abstract(s) and article(s)		1000 characters
Page 6: Practice Implementation and Replication			
25	It is important to understand a practice's process from its inception through its maintenance. Please describe, in narrative form, the optimal process for implementing and maintaining your practice using 3-5 sentences.		1300 characters
26	How long do you anticipate it will take to replicate your practice in another VHA facility?	Option 1: 1-3 months Option 2: 4-6 months Option 3: 7-9 months Option 4: 10-12 months Option 5: 12+ months	
27	In 3-5 sentences, please highlight any bright spots or challenges you discovered when you implemented your process. If you would change your process going forward, please explain why.		1300 characters
28	All innovative practices face some sort of risk and that is okay. Please select all types of risk that apply to your practice.	Option 1: Time Option 2: Technology Option 3: Funding/Resources Option 4: Process Option 5: Other	
28.1	Please explain what specific time related risks your practice faces and what your mitigation plan is for these risks.		1000 characters
28.2	Please explain what specific technology risks your practice faces and what your mitigation plan is for these risks.		1000 characters
28.3	Please explain what specific funding/resources risks your practice faces and what your mitigation plan is for these risks.		1000 characters

28.4	Please explain what specific process related risks your practice faces and what your mitigation plan is for these risks.		1000 characters
28.5	You indicated that your practice faces a unique risk. Please explain what specific risk(s) your practice faces and what your mitigation plan is for these risks.		1000 characters
29	List the optimal personnel resources needed to replicate your practice and the amount of time required by each of them (e.g., Registered Nurse - 15 hours/week, Business Analyst 40 hours/week)		1000 characters
30	List the optimal material resources (e.g., equipment, information technology (IT) support, space) needed to replicate your practice.		1000 characters
31	Will your practice need any external licensing or contracting work to successfully implement in a new facility?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No	
31.1	Please elaborate on your external licensing or contracting needs.		1000 characters
32	Has your practice received funding?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No	
32.1	Has your practice received Spark, Seed, and/or Spread funding from the VHA Innovators Network?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No	
32.1.1	Which stage(s) of Spark, Seed, and/or Spread did your practice receive funding for?	1. Spark: Idea 2. Spark: Challenge 3. Seed 4. Spread	
32.1.2	Total funding amount.		50 characters
32.2	Has your practice received funding from a source other than the VHA Innovators Network?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No	
32.2.1	Name of funding source.		100 characters
32.2.2	Total funding amount.		50 characters
32.2.3	Duration of funding.		50 characters
33	Please provide anything else about your practice that you'd like to share with us.		1300 characters
Page 7: VHA Shark Tank Interactions			
34	Have you previously applied for the VHA Shark Tank Competition?	Option 1: Yes Option 2: No	

35	How did you hear about the VHA Shark Tank Competition?	Option 1: All Employee Email Option 2: Email Blog Post Option 3: Facility Poster/e-Board Option 4: Innovation Specialists Option 5: Social Media Option 6: VA Colleague Option 7: Pathfinder Option 8: Other	
35.1	If Other, how did you hear about the VHA Shark Tank Competition?		200 characters
36	How was your experience applying to the 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition (e.g., Application ease, Question flow)?		300 characters
End Page: Thanks!			
	<p>Congratulations, you have successfully submitted your 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition application! Thank you for investing your time, thought, and effort into your submission. You can expect to receive a copy of your application within the next week. Your application will now be reviewed by subject matter experts from across VA and the Diffusion of Excellence team to determine semi finalists. You can expect to receive an update on your application in June.</p> <p>If you have any questions, please contact VHADiffusionSupport@va.gov.</p>		

2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition Evaluation Tool

Below is a copy of the evaluation rubric evaluators will use when reviewing and scoring 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition applications. This copy is intended for reference only. The final evaluation tool may have slight variation from the version below.

For the most up to date version of evaluation rubric, please visit [VHA Shark Tank](#) on Diffusion Marketplace and click the "Apply Now" button. You will find a link to download a copy of the evaluation rubric on the application landing page.

Evaluator Instructions

Thank you for participating as a 2023 VHA Shark Tank Competition application reviewer. Submissions should be assessed based on their feasibility, meaningfulness, and strategic value to VHA. While completing your evaluations, please remember that the goal of the VHA Shark Tank Competition is to identify field-developed practices that promote positive outcomes for Veterans, employees, and/or caregivers and facilitate the standardization of those practices across the health care system.

The questions below will ask you to rate on a scale of 1-7, with 1 being strongly disagree and 7 being strongly agree, the extent to which you agree with the statements provided. Please refer to the Evaluator Frequently Asked Questions document for additional guidance on the evaluation process. Your efforts will help to determine the next great group of Shark Tank promising practices, and we are very grateful!

Evaluation Questions

Applicants must have successfully implemented their practice in at least one facility. Successful implementation requires launching the practice and having data-based results collected for at least **three** months. The pilot facility fulfills this requirement.

1. Has this applicant successfully implemented their practice in at least one facility? **If no, this submission is invalid and should not be scored.**
 - Yes
 - No
2. Based on the information provided in the application:

Feasibility (21 points) (Required) How feasible is this project to implement at an additional VHA facility? This implies that VHA has the necessary resources (e.g. technology, people, etc.).						
The practice is replicable in another VHA facility in under 12 months.						
1 = Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Somewhat Disagree	4 = Neutral	5 = Somewhat Agree	6 = Agree	7 = Strongly Agree
The practice is process-focused.						
1 = Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Somewhat Disagree	4 = Neutral	5 = Somewhat Agree	6 = Agree	7 = Strongly Agree
The practice clearly specifies resource requirements. Examples Include: Necessary materials, FTEs, specialists, space, equipment						

1 = Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Somewhat Disagree	4 = Neutral	5 = Somewhat Agree	6 = Agree	7 = Strongly Agree
------------------------------	---------------------	------------------------------	--------------------	---------------------------	------------------	---------------------------

Meaningfulness (21 points) (Required)

How well does the project would meet the needs of Veterans, specific VA stakeholders, or VHA at large (e.g. clinicians, caregivers, staff, etc.) and how meaningful might it be?

The practice solves an important problem for Veterans, specific VA stakeholders, or VHA at large.

1 = Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Somewhat Disagree	4 = Neutral	5 = Somewhat Agree	6 = Agree	7 = Strongly Agree
------------------------------	---------------------	------------------------------	--------------------	---------------------------	------------------	---------------------------

The practice demonstrates *impact* on an identified problem with support from data-based evidence.

Example: Reduced Veteran's wait time for limb prosthetics by 39%

1 = Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Somewhat Disagree	4 = Neutral	5 = Somewhat Agree	6 = Agree	7 = Strongly Agree
------------------------------	---------------------	------------------------------	--------------------	---------------------------	------------------	---------------------------

The practice improves satisfaction or experience for the target population.

Example: Provided Veteran's a solution to a long-standing frustration

1 = Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Somewhat Disagree	4 = Neutral	5 = Somewhat Agree	6 = Agree	7 = Strongly Agree
------------------------------	---------------------	------------------------------	--------------------	---------------------------	------------------	---------------------------

Strategy (14 points) (Required)

How well does the practice align with VA and VHA Shark Tank Competition strategic priorities?

The practice aligns to one or more VHA Shark Tank Competition priorities. For the full list of VHA Shark Tank Priorities, please [visit here](#).

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Somewhat Disagree

4 = Neutral

5 = Somewhat Agree

6 = Agree

7 = Strongly Agree

The practice aligns to one or more VA strategic objective(s). For the full list of VA strategic objectives, please [visit here](#).

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Somewhat Disagree

4 = Neutral

5 = Somewhat Agree

6 = Agree

7 = Strongly Agree

3. Are there any similar practices, to your knowledge, currently ongoing within VHA? (required)
 - Yes
 - No
- 3.1. If yes, could you please describe the similar practice(s) including the practice leader and where it is implemented if you're aware.
4. Please provide any feedback that would help the applicant improve their practice moving forward. This feedback will be shared with the applicant following the evaluation period. (300 word limit; Required)
5. What would you like to see improved for next year's VHA Shark Tank Competition evaluation process?